

LEADING LADIES

"LOIS: LEAVING A SPIRITUAL LEGACY"

2 TIMOTHY 1:5

Mr. Rogers moved an entire room of celebrities to tears when he got up to receive his Life Achievement Award at the Emmys in 1997. Instead of going on about his accomplishments and listing off a bunch of rote thank-yous, he asked everyone to take 10 seconds with him "to think of the people who have helped you become who you are, those who cared about you and wanted what was best for you in life." "I'll count the time," he said gently, looking at his watch.

Years ago I asked a room full of people to identify the event in life, the book they had read—other than the Bible, the course they had taken, or the individual they considered most responsible for the person they had become. After everyone finished talking, it dawned on all of us at the same time that everyone had mentioned a person. No one mentioned a life-changing event or transformative course, even though they were all working at an academic institution. One in particular, the Director of the Counselling Center, talked, holding back his tears, about his grandfather. In closing, he commented on the irony that his grandfather never knew what a powerful influence he had had on his life—because he had never told him, something he clearly regretted.

For Timothy, it seems his grandmother, Lois, and

Securely-attached people are more sensitive to the suffering of others and better able to form rewarding relationships.

— Sharon Begley

mother, Eunice, were the ones who shaped his early life; Paul came years later.

This Week's Core Competency

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

Who are those who give away their lives to fulfill God's purposes? I suppose we think first of those who make an extraordinary commitment to ministry of one kind or another—perhaps church ministry, compassion ministry, or outreach ministry. While this is certainly true of them, it isn't true *exclusively* of them. All those who act in obedience to God, all those who live missional lives, all those who follow Christ as his disciples "give away" or better yet, "live" to fulfill God's purposes. But because living to fulfill God's purposes is a *relative* thing, not an *absolute* thing, there's always room for improvement. Put differently, those who are giving away their lives, namely—living to fulfill God's purposes—can always "up their game."

Since relationships have the power to transform lives, one way to "up your game" is to leverage your relationships. If you're a parent, take advantage of the transformative relationship you have with your children, not just when they're young but throughout their lives. Leave them a legacy of faith. Lois and Eunice are biblical examples of this. All we know about them from Scripture is that Eunice was Timothy's mother and Lois his maternal grandmother. His father was a Greek (Ac 16:1); that's all scripture says about the man. More importantly, we know that each of these women had a hand in teaching Timothy the

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the Old Testament scriptures from the time he was a baby. That one thing alone earned them both a mention in the Bible. To Timothy, whom Paul calls "my son whom I love" (1Co 4:17), he writes: "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2Ti 3:14-15). What parents do matters. Christian mothers—and fathers, too—have the opportunity, not to mention the responsibility, to set an example of godliness for their children as they inculcate a Christian worldview in them.

But mothers' influence isn't limited to overtly spiritual things. I found this research interesting. People who feel that Mom was reliably available to comfort them—providing an emotional safe haven, being there for her kids in times of distress—when they were hurt are characterized by what psychologists call *secure attachment*; people who don't are insecurely attached. Here's why attachment matters:

"People who are insecurely attached learned that they can't count on the most important people in their lives. They fear the unfamiliar, and need to reflexively defend what they believe even when confronted with evidence that it is wrong. They distrust people who seem different from them, have a greater fear of death, and show little altruism.

"In contrast, securely-attached people are more sensitive to the suffering of others and better able to form rewarding relationships. They think life's problems are manageable, and believe the obstacles the world throws at them can be overcome. They view themselves as strong and competent and believe their own actions can solve their problems. They are more altruistic—they're the ones who volunteer not because it makes them feel wanted but because they sincerely want to help. Secure attachment makes it easier to explore new ideas, and makes people more open to new information, intellectually curious, tolerant of ambiguity, and less dogmatic in their thinking. In short, secure attachment brings higher self-esteem, higher-quality adult couple relationships, reduced fear of death, greater tolerance for out-group members, and more effective organizational leadership. Surely mom deserves some flowers for that" (Sharon Begley, "Parenting: The Science of How Moms Make a Difference," www.thedailybeast.com/parenting-the-science-of-how-moms-make-a-difference).

day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

2 Timothy 1:5

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my dear son:

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. 4 Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

Cf. complementary passages

Acts 16:1-3

1 Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek. 2 The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

2 Timothy 3:14-15

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

In 2Tim 1:3-5

- * Underline "I thank God" in v. 3 and "your sincere faith" in v. 5.
- * Circle "reminded" in v. 5.
- * Bracket "lives in you" in v. 5.

* Circle "disciple" in v. 1.

* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 1.

* Circle "circumcised" in v. 3.

* Circle "was" in v. 3.

In Ac 16:1-3

- * Circle "Lystra" in v. 1.

In 2Ti 3:14-15

- * Underline vv. 14b-15a (from "because" to "Scriptures").

day **2** EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

2 Timothy 1:3-5

1. Paul says he *thanks God* as he remembers Timothy in his prayers. *Thanks God* for what?

2. Distinguish *sincere* faith from *insincere* faith.

3. Explain the *relationship* of the faith of Lois and Eunice, to Timothy.

Acts 16:1-3

4. Timothy is a disciple when Paul comes to Lystra on his second missionary journey (Ac 16:1). When did he become a Christian?

5. Explain the *contrast* in verse 1 and its implications.

6. How do you think *uncircumcised* Timothy was viewed by Jews on the one hand and Gentiles on the other?

7. Why did Paul have Timothy circumcised?

2 Timothy 3:14-15

8. Identify "those" in "those from whom you learned" the things "you have learned and are convinced of."

9. **Discussion:** Talk about how Timothy could have known the scriptures from infancy given he was the child of a mixed marriage.

day 3 EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

What three relevant passages say about Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5; Acts 16:1; and 2 Timothy 3:14-15), especially with respect to those who had an influence on his spiritual life, including Lois, his maternal grandmother, Eunice, his mother, his unnamed Greek father, and of course, Paul, is worth close examination, since the apostle addressed two letters to him and listed him as the cosender of six others (2Co 1:1; Php 1:1; Col 1:1; 1Th 1:1; 2Th 1:1; Phlm 1). The best way to proceed is to ask a number of questions and then answer them from these three relevant texts.

When Paul arrives in Lystra on his second missionary journey, he encounters Timothy, who is called a "disciple" (Ac 16:1), clearly indicating that he is a Christian, and who is also well spoken of by believers in the area, suggesting that he has been a Christian long enough to earn a good reputation within the believing community. Since Paul addresses him as a young man some fifteen years later, Timothy must have been in his late teens or early twenties at this time (see *The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ac 16:1). His mother is Jewish and also a believer, but his father is a Greek, evidently neither a convert to Judaism nor Christianity.

When did Timothy and his mother become Christians? While the text doesn't explicitly say, it does say that Paul visited Lystra on his first missionary journey, approximately one year earlier in A.D. 49 (Ac 14:8-23), and spent about three months there (see Harold Hoehner's chronology in H. Wayne House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament*, 130). That together with the fact that Paul calls Timothy, "my son whom I love" (1Co 4:17), implies strongly that Timothy was saved at that time.

Timothy's family was complicated. "Timothy's mother ('Eunice' by name, according to II Tim. 1:5) had married a Greek. Such intermarriage was strongly discouraged within most Jewish communities (recalling not least Neh. 9-10), but still took place often enough. The fact that Timothy had not been circumcised may also indicate that his mother had ceased to practice as a Jew. On the other hand, II Tim. 3.15 speaks of Timothy as having been taught the scriptures of his people from his childhood, so it may be that it was Timothy's Greek father who refused to allow him to be circumcised. As one regarded as an uncircumcised Jew, Timothy presumably did not attend the synagogue, but conceivably his parents were wealthy enough for his mother to have some Torah scrolls of her own. At any rate, Timothy's mother was sufficiently open to this Jewish gospel to have become a believer herself (was her husband now dead?)" (James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 216). So Timothy's mother, Eunice, as well as his maternal grandmother, Lois, were also converts at the same time.

If Lois and Eunice were actually saved first (2Tim 1:5), Timothy must have been saved shortly thereafter. One writer puts the details together this way: "It would seem, therefore, that, at a date not later than Paul's first missionary journey, grandmother Lois (living perhaps, with her daughter?) and mother Eunice had been converted, so that they saw in Christ the fulfillment of the promises, and placed their trust in him; and that these two women, in turn, had cooperated with Paul in that glorious work of grace which resulted in Timothy's conversion" (William Hendriksen, "Commentary on II Timothy," in

Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus, 228).

Did Timothy's Greek father die before his wife and son became Christians? Some commentators think so based on the Greek word translated "was" in Acts 16:3, "his father was a Greek." It's not the usual word. What's more, some manuscripts have "widow" instead of "Jewish" in verse 1, referring to Eunice. No English translation, however, follows the variant. Yet to the Philippians Paul writes: "But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel" (2:22), suggesting that Paul may have become a surrogate father to Timothy after his real father's death.

Timothy was the uncircumcised son of a mixed marriage, which suggests that Eunice may have abandoned or tempered her practice of Judaism following her marriage, perhaps to appease her husband. If so, she nevertheless managed to tutor her son from infancy in the fundamentals of Judaism

from the Old Testament scriptures—her husband's objections notwithstanding. Perhaps they settled on a compromise: she agreed to leave Timothy uncircumcised; he agreed to let her teach Timothy the scriptures privately. We don't know. By the way, the death of Timothy's shortly before or after his mother's conversion would explain why Paul could easily have him circumcised.

Was Timothy raised in a Christian home? While it is true that Lois and Eunice left Timothy a spiritual legacy, he was not raised in a Christian home. If Timothy was in his late teens or early twenties when Paul first came to Lystra, and if he had known the Holy Scriptures from infancy, he must have been taught them from a Jewish perspective. However, that teaching made it possible for Timothy to recognize that Jesus was the Christ and that in him the Old Testament promises and prophecies found their fulfillment when Paul came to town.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

The Message of the Passage

Leave your children a spiritual legacy by teaching them the word of God from infancy in preparation for receiving the gospel.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22.

Compare the legacy your parents left you with the one Timothy's mother and grandmother left for him.

Identify one or two people who, in Mr. Rogers' words, "have helped you become who you are."

Identify the ones you are determined to leave a legacy of faith.

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

In 2Tim 1:3-5

v. 5 **reminded** Lit., "receiving remembrance." "The fact that [*hupomnesis*], 'remembrance,' can refer to an external reminder has led some (Bengel, Bernard, Guthrie) to assume that Paul has just received an external reminder of Timothy's sincerity and that Paul's thankfulness is in reference to this. Onesiphorus would surely have updated Paul on Timothy's situation. Perhaps Timothy wrote Paul about his frustrations with the Ephesian church and his despondency about Paul's imprisonment. It would in fact be surprising if either or both of these did not occur . . . While this is possible in the present passage, it is not necessary" (William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 46, *Pastoral Epistles*, 470; see also William Hendriksen, "Commentary on II Timothy," in *Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus*, 227; Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC, 185). Most English translations do not reflect this connotation, denoting rather Paul's remembrance in general, e.g., "I recall your sincere faith . . ." (NET).

v. 5 **your sincere faith** "v 5 completes the thought begun in v. 3. 'I continually thank God . . . because I remember your sincere faith.' The NIV unfortunately starts v 5 as a new sentence, breaking the relationship between v3 and v 5 . . . In light of the desertions of those Paul considered brothers, both Demas (4:10) and others (4:16; cf. 1:15), people whose faith was evidently insincere, it is joyous for Paul to remember Timothy's sincere faith" (Mounce, 470).

v. 5 **lives in you** "Paul uses [*enoikein*], 'to dwell in,' when speaking of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:11; 2 Tim 1:14), the word of Christ (Col 3:16), God (2 Cor 6:16), sin (Rom 7:17), and here faith (2 Tim 1:5)" (Mounce, 471).

In Ac 16:1-3

v. 1 **Lystra** "Paul and Silas travel to Derbe and Lystra in southeast Galatia, revisiting sites noted in Acts 14:8-20. There they meet Timothy, who has a good reputation in Lystra and Iconium" (Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, BCNT, 521). Paul proceeded "to the cities where he and Barnabas had established churches on the first mission tour . . . At Lystra they found a disciple by the name of Timothy. Evidently Timothy's conversion dated back to Paul and Barnabas's first witness in that city (cf. 14:20)" (John B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC, 342).

v. 1 **disciple** "Timothy is introduced as already a 'disciple'. When he became one is not stated, and it is somewhat surprising that Luke did not pick him out in his account of the preaching and church founding in Lystra. But that could simply be the result of the rather allusive way Luke referred in that account both to Paul's preaching and to the establishment of a group of disciples there (14.9, 2-23)" (Dunn, 216).

v. 3 **circumcised** "According to rabbinic law, a child born of a Jewish mother and a Greek father was considered to be Jewish. The marriage of a Jewish woman to a non-Jew was considered a nonlegal marriage; and in all instances of nonlegal marriages, the lineage of the child was reckoned through the mother. According to this understanding, Timothy would have been considered a Jew. His father, however, being a Greek, would not have had this son circumcised; and the local Jews were aware of this (v. 3). Thus Paul had Timothy circumcised. Paul always worked through the Jewish synagogues where possible. To have had a member of his entourage be of Jewish lineage and yet uncircumcised would have hampered his effectiveness among the Jews" (Polhill, 343).

v. 3 **was** Because a textual variant replaces "Jewish" with "widow" in verse 1, and because the verb translated "was" is *hyperchen* not the usual *en*, some conclude that Timothy's father was dead at the time of Paul's visit.

In 2Ti 3:14-15

v. 14 **because . . .** One commentator argues that Timothy could not have been raised in a pious Jewish home since his mother was married to a Greek and Timothy was not circumcised. But neither of these facts preclude either his mother or his grandmother from teaching him the Old Testament scriptures from infancy. They simply reflect the realities of his mother's mixed marriage. Perhaps Timothy's father permitted his son to be taught the scriptures privately but not to identify as a Jew publicly. "It is clear that his mother was Jewish, which meant that Timothy was Jewish also. But her marriage to a Gentile meant a break in her relationship to her religion. Thus, on the one hand Timothy was 'technically an apostate Jew because he was uncircumcised,' and on the other hand was viewed by Gentiles as virtually Jewish. In order to clarify his status and to protect his own acceptance in the synagogue, Paul had Timothy circumcised. Yet it was already clear to Paul when he met him that Timothy had an authentic Jewish faith, thanks to the piety of his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois" (Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 223).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

When I was growing up I had a sweet neighbor named Mrs. Becky who always welcomed me into her house. She gave me M&Ms and big hugs and even let me vacuum. This was a big deal because she vacuumed every day and always made the vacuum lines on her carpet look like fans instead of plain straight lines and I thought that was so cool. She treated me like I was one of her own kids and took time out of her day to talk to me and make me feel special. Fast forward a few years and I'm now a mom of four kids. We have always had an open-door policy at our house, and their friends cycle in and out. Several kids don't bother knocking when they arrive. They walk in with a loud, "Hey, Mom!" and a hug and this always makes me so happy! Mother's Day is special because it's our day to celebrate and be honored. I cherish the thumbprint crafts and specially drawn cards I've been given over the years. But the random text or card from a friend of the family or child at church telling me Happy Mother's Day is the icing on the cake and my heart overflows. I'm reminded of the "moms" who have poured into my life with joy. I'm praying today is a special day for you as you remember all the "moms" who have made a difference in your walk with Christ.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 2Ti 1:1-7

1. How does Paul address Timothy in verse 2?
2. Who are Lois and Eunice?
3. What is sincere faith?

What Do You Think

How does a person with sincere faith act? What do they do and say?

What R U Going To Do

Write a letter to your mom telling her three things you like about her.

Core Comp

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to help with God's work.

Memory Verse

Micah 6:8 – *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed *Scrolls* _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

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30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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